

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 071592

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: UN, RQ, PFOR, VE

SUBJECT: PUERTO RICO IN COMMITTEE OF 24: VENEZUELAN
POSITION

REF: USUN 1104; USUN 1130; CARACAS 2956

1. DEPARTMENT HAS APPROACHED PUERTO RICAN GOVERNMENT THROUGH ITS OFFICE IN WASHINGTON URGING THAT GOVERNOR HER-
NANDEZ-COLON OR OTHER PUERTO RICAN POLITICAL LEADERS DISCUSS COMMITTEE OF 24 TREATMENT OF PUERTO RICO WITH ACCION DEMO-
CRATICA POLITICANS. WE BELIEVE IT MIGHT ALSO BE USEFUL TO INDICATE US CONCERN ABOUT MATTER DIRECTLY TO VENEZUELAN FOR-
EIGN MINISTRY OFFICIALS. IN VIEW OF APPARENT NONCOMMITTAL ATTITUDE OF PUERTO RICAN GOVERNMENT (USUN 1130) WE LEAVE
IT TO EMBASSY'S DISCRETION WHETHER AND WHEN IT WOULD BE USEFUL TO DISCUSS UN CONSIDERATION OF PUERTO RICO WITH FOR-
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EIGN MINISTER SCHACHT OR DIRECTOR GENERAL RAPHAEL.

2. SHOULD EMBASSY MAKE APPROACH, IT SHOULD EXPLAIN THAT IN 1946 US VOLUNTARILY PLACED PUERTO RICO ON LIST OF NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES. PEOPLE OF PUERTO RICO EXERCISED SELF-DETERMINATION IN 1952 BY VOTING ON NEW CONSTITUTION WHICH PROVIDED FOR AN ELECTED GOVERNOR AND CONSIDERABLE AUTONOMY. IN 1953 UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACCEPTED PUERTO RICO'S SELF-GOVERNING STATUS BY VOTING TO REMOVE IT

FROM LIST OF NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES. SINCE 1952, PUERTO RICAN PEOPLE REPEATEDLY HAVE VOTED INTO POWER PARTIES FAVORING CONTINUED ASSOCIATION WITH THE US. PARTIES FAVORING INDEPENDENCE RECEIVED ONLY ABOUT 5 OF POPULAR VOTE IN LAST ELECTION.

3. EMBASSY SHOULD STATE THAT IN VIEW OF PUERTO RICO'S SELF-GOVERNING STATUS, WHICH THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY RECOGNIZED IN 1953 AND REAFFIRMED IN 1971 BY VOTING AGAINST CUBAN PROPOSAL TO INSCRIBE QUESTION OF PUERTO RICO ON AGENDA, US CONSIDERS IT INAPPROPRIATE FOR UN TO CONSIDER PUERTO RICO. EMBASSY SHOULD EXPRESS US APPRECIATION FOR VENEZUELAN GOVERNMENT POSITION OPPOSING COMMITTEE OF 24 TREATMENT OF PUERTO RICO, AND SHOULD REQUEST CONTINUED SUPPORT FOR US AND PUERTO RICAN GOVERNMENTS' POSITION. YOU MAY ALSO NOTE THAT AS COMMITTEE OF 24 RAPPORTEUR, VENEZUELAN DELEGATE PLAYS KEY ROLE IN INFLUENCING COMMITTEE'S FUTURE HANDLING OF ISSUE.

4. DEPARTMENT WILL KEEP YOU INFORMED OF FURTHER EFFORTS TO HAVE PUERTO RICAN OFFICIALS DISCUSS MATTER DIRECTLY WITH VENEZUELAN POLITICAL LEADERS. RUSH

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